

Dear Sir/Madam

**FAO Commerce Committee**

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on HB 5263, having recently read of the planned building of an intensive rabbit farm.

Rabbits are complex individuals who deserve so much more than to be used in this way. They are naturally fearful animals who do not cope well in a farming environment, and they will experience extreme stress at slaughter.

Shockingly, rabbits are exempt from the Humane Slaughter Act 85-765. Among other things, this means rabbits may be fully conscious while being slaughtered. They do not need to be stunned before slaughter and an inspector is not required to be present, leaving them vulnerable to the worst kind of abuse with no requirement for documentation or supervision.

In today's more enlightened times, with views on factory farming of sentient creatures being very different than even only 20 years ago, this bill, should it be passed, must be seen as an archaic step backwards and would be a shameful blight on your state and any right minded person would sure be voting no to more animal suffering, excused as 'farming'.

Rabbit farms will be a breeding ground for disease, with so many animals packed into one space. The highly contagious Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease will thrive in such conditions, and this could lead to the decimation of wild and domestic rabbits in the area.

There is very little demand for rabbit meat, most people are repulsed at the thought of consuming the third most popular household pet. People are in fact choosing to avoid animal products altogether in record numbers. Whole Foods and other specialty stores have long stopped selling rabbit meat after concluding there was no market for sales.

There is simply no need for such a backwards step to allow intensive rabbit farming and slaughter in this day and age.

Yours faithfully

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